

May 23, 2005

Dear Oprah,

My story is not heartbreaking or awe inspiring, like so many of the people Robert Barron has helped. My story is just about the chance to do something normal, put my hair behind my ear, wear a ponytail, or have my hair done for a formal event. These things sound silly, even mundane, but to me so very important. My left ear was disfigured in a car accident when I was 3 years old. I had several plastic surgeries to reconstruct my ear. They were disappointing and not aesthetically pleasing.

As a young child, I was very self conscious of my disfigured ear, and was always afraid people would see it when the wind blew or during gym class. Even as I grew older, I was aware of my disfigurement and made every effort to conceal it. I always dreamed of someone who would be able to fix my ear, when technology or plastic surgery improved.

I went to several plastic surgeons who told me that even with the most optimistic outcome, they could not give me the results I was looking for. My niece, Melissa was watching the Oprah show one day when Robert Barron was on. She called and told me about the amazing prosthetic ears that Robert Barron could create. After conducting a Google search of "prosthetic ear" I found Robert Barron. We talked on the phone and he asked me to send pictures of my disfigured ear, which I did immediately. He called back within the hour and said "You have a nice looking yellow lab.", I laughed and said "What?" He said, "Your dog was in the background of the pictures you sent." Robert Barron also has a yellow lab, a big wonderful dog named Boulder. Then he said, "I can help you- I can give you a perfect ear. You just need to come see me." He spoke with such passion and commitment; I knew I had found the right man for the job.

After two trips to Virginia, I now have what I long ago gave up hoping for- a normal left ear. After leaving Robert Barron's office for the airport, I put my hair in a ponytail. I thought my new ear looked HUGE because I have only seen myself with my tiny, disfigured ear. I walked through the airport smiling and confident, I knew my ear looked perfectly normal- an amazing thing indeed! I am so grateful to have found Robert Barron. I know that my prosthetic ear will not change my life, but to me it is a dream come true.

Best Wishes,



Eileen Sauer

May 25, 2005

Dear Oprah,

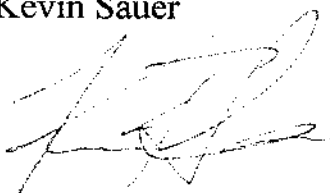
I can still remember back when I was growing up how many different hairstyles my mother has had. I could probably name around 15 different and sometimes weird styles. The one thing I never saw her do with her hair is put it in a pony tail.

Piecing a story together as a small child is quite a difficult task as I had never known anything different. Over the years I was able to gather bits and shards of information and formed the story in my mind that ended in a silent tragedy for my mother. Her left ear had been deformed in a car accident at an extremely young age. Whenever I thought about her ear I would always wonder where medical science was. Organ transplants are commonplace procedures today, and yet still the reconstruction of one piece of a person is a next to impossible task.

With almost no warning my mom found a man named Robert Barron and said she had a way to replace her ear. It seemed like the next day she was off on a trip to Washington D.C. and returned from a second trip with a seamless addition to her face, a new ear that seemed to come straight from science fiction. The first thing I had to ask her was which ear was fake (I had forgotten). About once I week I'll still have to ask which ear is fake after staring at it trying to decide which one it is. Now, most people that I see her in conversation with have no idea that anything is there at all, and that is exactly how it works best. The one friend of mine my mother told stood blankly with a dropped jaw and was convinced we were tricking him for a good ten minutes.

But in the end, this seemingly small addition to her face is much larger than a piece of silicone or plastic, but a huge weight I see lifted off her shoulders every time she pulls her hair back into a pony tail or forgets that she is wearing her ear. For my mother, this is the one thing she as always dreamed of, and the man who made this dream come true is a miracle worker. "Which ear is it again Mom?"

Kevin Sauer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Sauer', with a stylized flourish at the end.